

Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 18

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

- NORTHWEST
- NORTHEAST
- MISSISSIPPI RIVER
- SOUTHEAST
- SOUTHWEST

NORTHWEST

Black Hawk Lake

Water temperature is in the mid 50's. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use crawlers fished under a bobber. Most action has been in Town Bay off the stone piers, the floating dock, and the fish house. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers are picking up perch from the floating dock and the fish house in Town Bay. Some have had luck fishing from the inlet bridge and the State Marina. **Walleye** - Fair: A few have been picked up off Ice House Point using twisters. Look for the post-spawn bite to pick up near shore.

Storm Lake (including Little Storm Lake)

Water temperatures are in the low to mid 50's. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers have picked up crappie in the marina using crawlers and minnows. **White Bass** - Fair: Pick up white bass from shore with crawlers and twisters. **Walleye** - Fair: A few have been

picked up from shore in the marina and along the north and east shores using twisters. Look for the post-spawn bite to pick up.

Water temperatures are in the low to mid 50's. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

The courtesy docks at McIntosh, Lynne Lorenzen, Bayside and City boat ramps are in. The fish cleaning station is open for the season. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers wading the east shore are catching walleyes after dark on small jigs and minnows. Boat anglers are having success slip bobber fishing the rock reefs. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish the edge of the rushes with a small minnow. **Yellow Bass** - Slow.

Winnebago River

Now is the time to target pike and walleye. Fish areas with current breaks near dams and where a stream enters the river.

For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Channel Catfish - Good: Prime time is here; ice-out provides an excellent bite using traditional channel catfish baits. Fish twilight and after dark; fish will be on a feeding frenzy and provide lots of "pole bending" action.

Lost Island Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Report of some bluegill and crappie being caught from the canal.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Walleye - Good: Look for wader fishing to pick up as the water warms. Fish slow with a jig and minnow or twister tails on light jig heads.

Spirit Lake

Black Crappie - Good: Expect action to start in the Templar Park lagoon as the water warms. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Early spring provides superb action for bass on calm sunny days with a jig and minnow on shallow rock piles.

West Okoboji Lake

Bluegill - Good: Traditionally, Triboji Lagoon provides the first action for bluegills. Expect action to start once the water temperature warms.

Water temperature is 43 degrees; expect fishing to improve as the water warms. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. Anglers are seeing a nice variety of fish in the creel. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use dead chubs fished in the impoundments or slack water areas. Keep your bait on the river bottom. **Walleye** - Good: Try a jig tipped with a minnow or plastic tails. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are hitting spoons, crankbaits and hooks tipped with dead chubs below dams and slack water areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallies are starting to show up; use crankbaits.

Decorah District Streams

Trout streams are in good condition. Many gravel roads remain in rough shape; watch for soft spots, especially in parking lots. Hatchery trucks are stocking as many spots as possible. Check the **2019 trout stream stocking calendar** or call the stocking number at 563-927- 5736 to find out when your favorite trout stream will be stocked. **Brown Trout** - Good: Nice blue wing olive and a few minor caddis flies are hatching midafternoon. Fish are hitting just below the surface; nymph fishing might work best. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Use a minnow or worm under a bobber. Try also a leach pattern. **Brook Trout** - Good: Midges are hatching on sunny afternoons. If trout are chasing minnows at tails of riffles, try using a streamer or minnow imitating lure.

Lake Hendricks

The lake has a brown tint to it. Fish shallow bays and along rocky shorelines later in the day. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a hook tipped with a minnow under a bobber near brush piles or sunny shoreline. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small hook tipped with a small piece of worm or left over waxies under a bobber. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Jigs tipped with plastic twister tail or jerkbait will catch a hungry bass. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use a jig tipped with a nightcrawler around the rocky shores with wind-blown material.

Lake Meyer

Anglers are catching a variety of fish. Catches rate vary with the changing weather patterns. Clarity is about 5 feet. Water temperature is mid-50's. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with a small piece of worm around brush or logs in the water. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try small plastic lures or hair jigs fished in shallow rocky shores. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Crankbaits or jerkbaits work well. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are in the shallows spawning; try swimbaits, spoons or a hook baited with a minnow.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

Water levels and flows are stabilizing. Clarity is excellent. **Walleye** - Good: Use a jig tipped with a minnow or shallow water crankbait in the slack water areas below dams. **White Sucker** - Good: Try a worm fished off the bottom. Suckers become more active when the water warms in the 50's.

<u>Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)</u>

Flows remain high, but levels are stabilizing. Clarity is excellent. Find water level information at https://waterdata.usgs.gov/ia/nwis/rt. White Sucker - Excellent: Suckers are biting; use a worm fished on bottom. You might have to use a bit more weight to keep the line down with the high flows. Walleye - Good: A variety of lures will catch walleye. Fish slack water below dams or off-channel areas.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Flows are high; river levels are stabilizing. Clarity is excellent. Water temperature is in the low 50's. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are biting; try jigs tipped with a minnow or crankbaits. **White Sucker** - Excellent: Use a hook tipped with a nightcrawler fished on the bottom. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait or nightcrawlers. **Northern Pike** - Good: Pike are hitting dead chubs or suckers. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Anglers are catching large numbers of perch greater than 10 inches; use nightcrawlers or red worms.

Volga Lake

Concentrate efforts along the shore and shallow warmer water. Boat docks are in. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with waxworms or spikes under a bobber in shallow areas. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try a hook tipped with a minnow under a bobber in shallow bays. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Crankbaits and jigs tipped with a variety of plastics will hook a bass.

Good reports of fish biting throughout the district. Storms through Thursday with temperatures in the 60's and breezy. Area streams and rivers levels are relatively stable with excellent clarity. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

Smallmouth bass and northern pike are hitting well on warmer days. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Try also artificial spinnerbaits. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve large artificial baits or spoons. Try also floating a live shiner or sucker under a bobber. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers are doing well on catfish using cut baits fished on the bottom.

George Wyth Lake

Northern Pike - Good: Cast artificial baits or spoons.

Green Belt Lake

Anglers are catching largemouth bass. Largemouth Bass - Fair: Cast topwater baits early morning or late evening. Try also crankbaits and spinnerbaits.

Manchester District Streams

Manchester trout streams remain in excellent condition, but access to some are in sloppy condition. Richmond Springs in Backbone State Park can be accessed through the north entrance only.

Maguoketa River (above Monticello)

Reports of walleye being caught on the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler.

Martens Lake

Anglers are catching a few crappie in the canal at Sweet Marsh. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Cast and retrieve various colored tube jigs or float a crappie minnow under a slip

bobber. **White Crappie** - Fair: Cast and retrieve various colored tube jigs or float a crappie minnow under a slip bobber.

North Prairie Lake

Anglers are doing well catching trout; the lake was stocked last Saturday. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy artificial lures or jigs.

Shell Rock River (Greene to Shell Rock)

Anglers are catching walleye and northern pike on the Shell Rock River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve large artificial baits or spoons. Try also floating a live shiner or chub under a bobber.

South Prairie Lake

Bluegill, crappie and largemouth bass are moving shallow as temperatures increase. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Cast topwater baits early morning or late evening. Try also crankbaits and spinnerbaits. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try fishing a small piece of nightcrawler under a slip bobber at various depths to find bluegill. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Cast colored tube jigs or float a crappie minnow under a slip bobber.

<u>Wapsipinicon River (Tripoli to Troy Mills)</u>

Reports of anglers catching walleye and smallmouth bass on the Wapsipinicon River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler.

Smallmouth Bass - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Try also artificial spinnerbaits.

Good reports of anglers catching walleye, smallmouth bass and northern pike on the interior rivers. Rain is forecast for the next couple of days, so check river levels for the upcoming weekend. Trout streams remain in excellent condition. Call the N.E. lowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

River level is 15.2 feet at Lansing and is expected to reach 16.4 feet. Water temperature is 46 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in flooded areas. **Walleye** - Good: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use light tackle fished in the flooded trees.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level is 25.2 feet at Lynxville and is expected to reach 27 feet next week. Water temperature is 46 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in

flooded areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level is 17.1 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to rise to 19.3 feet next week. Water temperature is 44 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in flooded areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam.

Upper Mississippi river levels are on the rise again this week. Navigation is not recommended due to flooding. Boaters should operate at no wake speed to reduce damage to shorelines and flooded structures. Most boat ramps are under water. Water clarity is reduced; water temperature is near 46 degrees.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are holding steady at moderate flood levels. Levels are 19.2 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 20.8 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is 44 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded or have debris on them. **Sauger** - Good: Anglers are using a jig and minnows; fishing was good, even though water was flooding. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Expect northern pike to start to feed heavily now they are almost done spawning.

Mississippi River Pool 13

As of April 17th, the Bellevue City Boat ramp is temporarily closed due to flooding. Water level is 18.6 feet at Lock and Dam 12 and is holding steady. This level is still in moderate flood stage. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is 45 degrees. **Sauger** - Good: Use a three way rig with minnows or a jig and minnow. They are generally very tight to the bank in high water levels. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Expect northern pike to start feeding heavily now they are almost done spawning.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water levels are holding somewhat steady near 19.1 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 20.3 feet at Camanche and 13.6 feet at LeClaire. These are all at moderate flood levels. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 45 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded. **Sauger** - Good: If you can find a launch spot, sauger and walleye are being caught on jig and minnows very close to the bank.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water levels are at 19 feet and may recede slight. This level is still at a major flood threat. Water clarity is fair. The water temperature is around 45 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded.

Most boat ramps are closed due to the flooding; check ahead if you are traveling to a boat ramp. Water levels have crested and are holding steady in moderate flood levels throughout the district. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

Mississippi River Pool 16

Tailwater stage is 19.03 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities; flood stage is 15 feet. The Marquette St boat ramp, Credit Island boat ramp, Buffalo Shores boat ramp, Clark's Ferry boat ramp, Shady Creek boat ramp, and Fairport boat ramps are all closed due to high water.

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is 18.98 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage in Muscatine is 20.23 feet; flood stage is 16 feet. The Muscatine City boat ramps are closed due to high water. Kilpeck Landing and Big Timber are also closed due to flooding.

Mississippi River Pool 18

Tailwater stage is 19.59 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage at Keithsburg is 17.98 feet; flood stage is 14 feet. The Toolsboro landing is closed due to high water. The Hawkeye Dolbee access will also be under water.

Mississippi Pools 16-19 are still above flood stage, but are falling slowly. Many of the boat ramps are closed due to flooding. We have not received any fishing report information this week due to the high water conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

Just a few anglers getting out with the warm weather. Water temperature is around 50 degrees. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers are catching a few bass; look for them on the north side in the shallows where the sun hits the water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Work the shallower brush piles in the sun. **Muskellunge** - Fair: Anglers are catching an occasional muskie while fishing for bass; not quite 40 inches yet.

Environmental Discovery Park North Pond

Plenty of trout are left over from the spring stocking on March 29. The next couple of days look nice to take the kids fishing. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Brook Trout** - Good: The trout have had a chance to settle down; look for them to be around the habitat and in the corners. Power bait or waxworms are good baits for the kids to try. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: The trout have had a chance to settle down; look for them to be around the habitat and in the corners. Power bait or waxworms are good baits for the kids to try.

Lake Belva Deer

Water temperature is around 50 degrees. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow: A few bass were caught during the warmer weather along the riprap in the sun.

Lake Darling

Water temperature was 52 degrees on Thursday morning (April 18). Water clarity

remains at about 2 1/2 feet. The docks are in at the boat ramps. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow: Anglers continue to pick up a few bass in the shallows on the warmer days. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Catching a few crappies around some of the brush piles; it will be a while before they start to move in shallow.

Lost Grove Lake

Boat docks are in at the ramps. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers continue to pick up some bass up in the flooded timber on sunny afternoons. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Anglers are picking up a few crappies in the flooded timber in a little deeper water.

Wilson Lake

Plenty of trout are left over from the stocking at the end of March. Get the kids out this weekend and catch some. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Work the culvert piles and cedar trees; the trout have settled some, so it's a good time to switch to natural baits and power bait under a bobber in these areas. **Brook Trout** - Good: It was a 500 brook trout/500 rainbow trout mix at the stocking; look for them to be in the same places as the rainbows.

For more information on the above lake, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake level, as of April 18, is 685 feet and is falling. It is predicted to finally reach spring pool of 679 feet on April 24. There has been very little fishing activity on the lake; no reports are available.

Diamond Lake

The fishing cleaning station and restrooms are open for the season. **Black Crappie** - Good: The warm up pushed crappies shallower. Tube jigs or jigs tipped with worms work best. Some limits have been reported.

Lake Macbride

The water temperature this week was about 50 degrees. **Walleye** - Fair: Some fish (mostly males) are very shallow, while others are still out deeper. The shallow bite should improve as water temperatures warm. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some fish are on deep brush, while others are pushing shallower. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Fair: Wipers are starting to move shallower and beginning to chase bait and lures.

Otter Creek Lake

The lake is full; the water is fairly clear. The boat docks are in, but the fish cleaning station is still closed. **Yellow Bass** – Fair.

Prairie Park Fishery

2000 trout will be released here this Saturday, April 20 at 10 a.m. A family fishing event will be part of the stocking. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Brook Trout** – Excellent. **Rainbow Trout** – Excellent.

Sand Lake

This lake is in Marshalltown. 2000 trout will be released here on this Saturday, April 20 at noon. A family fishing event will be part of the stocking. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** – Fair. **Yellow Bass** – Fair. **Rainbow Trout** – Excellent. **Brook Trout** – Excellent.

<u>Wapsipinicon River (Troy Mills to Oxford Junction)</u>

Walleye - Fair: The bite has slowed, but some fish are still being caught on jigs below the dams. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Nice fish are being reported on cut bait.

For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

Lake Miami

Start in the shallows using small jigs for bluegill.

Lake Sugema

Try jigs tipped with minnows around the flooded timber for crappie.

Lake Wapello

Channel Catfish - Fair: Try cut bait or dead chubs.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

Trout were stocked on March 30. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. Catch trout with a variety of methods including a live minnow fished under a bobber, small tube jigs and in-line spinners.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 906.31 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. The water temperature is in the upper 40's. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers are catching channel catfish; use cut bait or shad sides. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Crappie fishing remains slow. Warmer water will help in the upcoming weeks.

Red Haw Lake

Try small jigs in the shallows for bluegills or cut bait for channel catfish.

The district includes Mahaska, Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, Appanoose, Wapello, Davis and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central lowa.

SOUTHWEST

Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Cast in-line spinners, small twister tail and paddle tail jigs or live minnows. Start by fishing the east shoreline of the north and south parts of the lake. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

Banner Lake (south)

Trout were stocked on April 6. The lake water clarity is less than normal after flooding. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout - Good:** Fish bright colored spinners and jigs or live bait.

Big Creek Lake

Walleye - Fair: The walleye bite is getting better as the lake warms up. Use jigs or troll spinner rigs in the evenings out from the marina to past the beach and around the East and West Ramp bay. If shore fishing, cast jigs or live bait under a slip bobber in these same areas.

Boone District Farm Ponds

Black Crappie - Good: Pre-spawn fishing is good in city ponds that have crappies. Fish live minnows under a bobber or cast small twister tail jigs off the shorelines that get the most sunlight.

Des Moines River (Saylorville to Red Rock)

Channel Catfish - Fair: Catch channel catfish in the backed up water in the tributaries out of the main river current. Cut gizzard shad is the best bait.

Terra Lake

Trout were stocked on April 6. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout. Rainbow Trout - Good: Use small inline spinners and jigs with twister or paddle tails. Try also waxworms and live minnows.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

Anderson Area Pond 1

Expect to catch bluegills and crappies this spring. **Black Crappie** - No Report: As the water warms, find black crappies along the dam and in the upper end of the lake.

Greenfield Lake

Greenfield Lake has a good population of black crappies and fair numbers of walleyes to provide fishing this spring. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Find crappies around the jetties.

Lake Anita

Crappie and bluegill fishing starts early spring in Lake Anita in the upper end of the east arm. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A few crappies are being caught in the upper end of the east arm. Cast and retrieve a small jig or a minnow 18 inches under a bobber. **Bluegill** - Slow: A few bluegills are picked up by crappie anglers.

Lake Manawa

Fish the canals for good crappie fishing. **Black Crappie** - Good: Anglers report good crappie fishing in the canals. Cast minnows under a bobber to catch 10 inch crappies. **Walleye** - No Report: Walleyes should be close to shore. Cast twister tails with a slow retrieve.

Orient Lake

Orient Lake has a good population of black crappies that should provide good fishing this spring. **Black Crappie** - No Report: Cast jigs or minnows along the dam and east shore to find 10 plus inch black crappies.

Viking Lake

Early spring fishing at Viking Lake starts when the crappies move into in the campground area. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Look for crappies in the far upper end of the lake and behind the pontoons. Cast and slowly retrieve a small 1/64th or 1/32nd ounce jig. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Viking Lake has a good population of bass up to 20 inches. Fish the deeper points and drop-off along the main channel.

Water temperatures are in the upper 50's. Look for fish to move shallow on warm sunny days. Small lakes/farm ponds warm up faster and provide good fishing early spring. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Green Valley Lake

Largemouth Bass - Good: Catch largemouth bass of all sizes with crankbaits or spinnerbaits fished near the silt dams.

Little River Watershed Lake

Walleye - Slow: Catch walleye up to 22 inches using jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the dam or rocky shoreline areas.

Three Mile Lake

Walleye - Fair: Catch walleye up to 22 inches with jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the dam.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Catch Crappie up to 9.5 inches using minnows fished near cedar tree brush piles. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Try using finesse plastics fished near cedar tree brush piles for largemouth bass of all sizes. **Walleye** - Slow: Use jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the dam for walleyes of all sizes.

Water temperature in most Mount Ayr district lakes is in the low 50's. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.